**CAROLINE ALLEN－PAINTINGS A DAY ARTIST STATEMENT**

When I opened my eyes, it was 11:25 p.m. Two nurses floated into view. They asked me questions that I answered, and then quickly forgot.

“I have to get up to my room now,” I said, still woozy from the drugs.

“You’ve just gotten out of surgery,” one of the nurses said. That morning, I broke my ankle, severed every bone connecting foot to leg.

“I’m doing a painting a day,” I slurred. “I have to finish a painting by midnight.”

One nurse laughed. “Honey, that just isn’t going to happen.”

I went in and out of sleep for a few minutes. When I opened my eyes again, the two nurses stood across the room. They glowed. I was seeing the glory of their souls. “Oh my God,” I called to them, “you’re angels.” I felt like crying.

They came over. “Yes,” one said gently. “Yes, we are.”

“Please I have to get up to my room,” I said. A friend had dropped off art supplies. The clock read 11:40 p.m. “Please.” Did they understand that my paintings were my angels?

One said, “OK, let’s do it.”

They called a young man over, unleashed me from the machines, and he rolled me to the elevator.

In my room at 11:50, a nurse got me a cup of water, and handed me the bag of art supplies. Still high, I painted an apple. It was 11:59 p.m., July 1st, 2016, when I posted the painting to social media. The “Morphine Apple”, as the painting became known, was the 184th painting I’d done so far that year. (Go to carolineallen.com to see the apple.) In that year, I painted a 9x12 watercolor every single day no matter what -- after my father’s funeral, in the gate area (my carry-on as easel) during a delayed flight back from Costa Rica, in a hotel room during a business trip. Every. Single. Day.

What you see on display here are the highlights. Many of the paintings were done in as little as 20 minutes, most in an hour. Why even do a painting a day a year? I was so busy running my business, and in the throes of getting my novels published, that I had very little time for visual art. Art is my bliss, and it was breaking my heart.

What did I learn? I learned to let go of control and go from my gut. I learned when I was in the zone of visual art, the energy would engulf my dreaming world, and paintings would appear as if by magic. I learned that even exhausted, pissed off, upset, I could create BEAUTY. I learned that EVERY EMOTION was acceptable here in the world of visual art. Most importantly, I engaged the art angels, and found again my bliss.